

# The Constitution of the Northern Ireland Branch of the British Veterinary Association

## Name

1. The name of the organisation shall be The Northern Ireland Branch of the British Veterinary Association ('the Northern Ireland Branch').

## Objects

2. The objects of the Northern Ireland Branch shall be to
  - 2.1. foster the interests of the veterinary profession in Northern Ireland;
  - 2.2. promote the British Veterinary Association (BVA) in Northern Ireland
  - 2.3. assist the BVA in its activities by advising on the consensus view of Northern Ireland members on Northern Ireland and United Kingdom issues particularly with reference to the NI Assembly, DAERA, the Ulster Farmer's Union and Northern Ireland animal welfare organisations; and
  - 2.4. promote meetings in any part of Northern Ireland for the discussion of veterinary topics and kindred subjects.

## Membership

3. The membership of the Northern Ireland Branch shall be all members of the BVA resident in Northern Ireland ('a Member' or 'the Members').

## Officers

4. There shall be four officers of the Branch ('the Officers'), each of whom shall be a Member:
  - 4.1. President;
  - 4.2. Junior Vice-President
  - 4.3. Senior Vice President; and
  - 4.4. Honorary Secretary.

## Junior Vice-President and President

5. A BVA member shall be elected to normally serve one year as Junior Vice-President followed by one year as President.
6. The role of the President shall be to:
  - 6.1. be the principal representative of the Branch in relation to veterinary matters; and
  - 6.2. chair all meetings of the Branch.
7. In the event of incapacity or prolonged absence of the President, the Junior Vice-President shall act in their place.

## Senior Vice President

8. Following the completion of a presidential term, the former President will assume the role of Senior Vice President for one year.
9. Once the term of a Senior Vice President is complete, the former Senior Vice President will assume membership of the Council at the meeting of the Branch following the AGM.

### Honorary Secretary

10. A BVA member shall be elected to normally serve as Honorary Secretary for three years.
11. The role of the Honorary Secretary shall be to oversee the administration of the Branch.
12. In the event of a vacancy occurring amongst the Officers, the Council may at its discretion appoint a substitute to fill the vacancy at its next meeting and the appointment shall continue until the next AGM.

### Council

13. There shall be a council ('the Council') of the Branch and its membership ('the Councillors') shall be the Officers of the Branch, up to 6 general BVA Northern Ireland Branch Council members, plus one representative of each of the following organisations, each of whom shall be a BVA Member:
  - 13.1. North of Ireland Veterinary Association (NIVA);
  - 13.2. Association of Veterinary Surgeons Practising in Northern Ireland (AVSPNI)
  - 13.3. a representative of the major specialist divisions (NOTE: All specialist divisions should be given the opportunity to attend);
  - 13.4. the elected Regional Representative to BVA Council;
  - 13.5. a recent graduate (the Young Vet Network)
  - 13.6. BVNA(NI)
  - 13.7. FSA(NI)
  - 13.8. DAERA Veterinary Service
  - 13.9. Agri-Food & Biosciences Institute (AFBI) Veterinary Sciences Division
  - 13.10. the Senior Vice-President
  - 13.11. the Branch nominated member of BVA Policy Committee
14. Each of these organisations may nominate one Councillor and one alternate who may attend the Council in the place of the Councillor.
15. The membership of the Council shall be ratified at the AGM each year. Election of Officers and Council members will normally be by vote of those present at the AGM.
  - 15.1. All organisations shall inform the Honorary Secretary of nominations before the AGM.
  - 15.2. Nominees will assume membership of the Council at the meeting of the Branch following the AGM.
16. It shall be possible for a single individual to represent more than one organisation at meetings of the Council or as an alternate if so ratified.
17. The Council may at any time invite any organisation with a significant veterinary constituency to

nominate a representative to join the Council. If the invitation is accepted the representative will be formally ratified at the next AGM in the usual way.

18. Council may ask individuals with particular expertise to attend meetings and to help in their business.
19. Such individuals shall not have voting rights upon attendance.
20. The role of the Council shall be to
  - 20.1. discuss veterinary policy issues as they relate to Northern Ireland and make all efforts to reach a consensus view on those issues; and
  - 20.2. assist the BVA in formulating policy.
21. The quorum for a meeting of the Council shall be five.
22. The Council shall meet at least three times per year, at least one of which shall be in person (the AGM). Branch will liaise with other representative organisations in NI to ensure duplication or conflict of interest does not arise re scheduling of meetings.
23. The President shall have a casting vote in addition to his or her own vote where necessary.

### **Annual General Meeting**

24. There shall be an Annual General Meeting ('the AGM') which all Members shall be entitled to attend.
25. The AGM shall
  - 25.1. elect the Officers;
  - 25.2. ratify the membership of the Council;
26. The quorum for an AGM shall be seven or 1% of the Members, whichever is the larger number, which figure to be determined one month prior to the meeting.

### **Extraordinary General Meeting (EGM)**

27. An EGM may be convened by the Council as required.
28. An EGM may only discuss the business for which it was convened.

### **Secretariat**

29. Secretariat to the Northern Ireland Branch will be supplied by the BVA working in close liaison with the existing secretariat of the local veterinary associations.

### **Changes to the Constitution**

30. Proposed changes to this Constitution must be presented to all Councillors and subsequently approved at a Branch AGM and by BVA's Board.